

**FINAL
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FNSI) FOR THE
CLOSURE, DISPOSAL, AND REUSE OF THE
BLUCHER S. THARP MEMORIAL U.S. ARMY RESERVE CENTER,
AMARILLO, TEXAS**

Pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 CFR 1400-1508) for implementing the procedural provisions of the *National Environmental Policy Act* (NEPA) (42 United States (U.S.) Code [U.S.C.] 4321 et. seq.) and the U.S. Department of Army Regulation 32 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 651 (*Environmental Analysis of Army Actions*; Final Rule), as well as policy and guidance provided by the *Base Realignment and Closure Manual for Compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act*, the U.S. Army conducted an Environmental Assessment (EA) of potential environmental effects associated with implementation of Base Closure and Realignment (BRAC) actions.

Purpose and Need. On September 8, 2005, the Defense BRAC Commission recommended closure of the Blucher S. Tharp Memorial U.S. Army Reserve (USAR) Center, Amarillo, Texas and relocation of essential missions to other installations. These recommendations were approved by the President on September 23, 2005, were forwarded to Congress, and on November 9, 2005, the recommendations became law.

The BRAC Commission recommendations must now be implemented as provided for in the Defense BRAC Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-510), as amended. The BRAC Commission made the following recommendations concerning Blucher S. Tharp Memorial USAR Center, Amarillo, Texas:

“Close the Tharp United States Army Reserve Center, Amarillo, TX, and relocate units to a new Armed Forces Reserve Center in Amarillo, TX, if the Army is able to acquire land suitable for the construction of the facilities. The new AFRC shall have the capability to accommodate Texas National Guard Units from

the following Texas ARNG Readiness Centers: Amarillo, Pampa, and Hale Co, TX, if the state decides to relocate those National Guard units."

Description of the Proposed Action. The Proposed Action, disposal and reuse, follows the BRAC Commission's recommendation to close the Blucher S. Tharp USAR Center, Amarillo, Texas.

Alternatives. Four alternatives are evaluated in the EA. *

Preferred Alternative. For the Preferred Alternative, the Army would close the Blucher S. Tharp Memorial USAR Center and hold a public auction facilitated by the General Services Administration (GSA). The Property is zoned light commercial, which would allow for a number of reuses. Considering the existing surrounding development, the most suitable proposed reuse of the Property would include commercial reuse of the existing facilities or redevelopment of the Property for commercial or retail business.

Expanded Site Plan Alternative. For the Expanded Site Plan Alternative, the Army would close the Blucher S. Tharp USAR Center and hold a public auction facilitated by the GSA. For purposes of comparing this alternative with other alternatives, the EA assumes that three of the components of the current property use (the Administration Building, the Organizational Maintenance Shop, and the parking lots) will increase to 150 percent of current capacity under a commercial re-use scenario.

Caretaker Status Alternative. From the time of operational closure until conveyance of the Property, the Army will provide maintenance to preserve and protect the site for reuse in an economical manner that facilitates redevelopment. Under this alternative, the Army would reduce maintenance levels to the minimum level for surplus government property.

No Action Alternative. CEQ regulations require analysis of the No Action Alternative in an EA, for it serves as the baseline against which the impacts of the Proposed Action and alternatives will be evaluated. Accordingly, the No Action Alternative is evaluated in the EA.

Alternatives Considered and Eliminated from Further Analysis. Since no cleanup actions are required, the Property is not a suitable candidate for early transfer, and this alternative was not carried forward for further analysis. A Local Reuse Authority (LRA) was not established and a reuse plan was not developed; therefore, no other reuses are carried forward for further analysis in the EA.

Factors Considered in Determining that an Environmental Impact Statement is not Required. Impacts were analyzed for land use, aesthetics and visual resources, air quality, noise, geology and soils, water resources, biological resources, cultural resources, socioeconomics, transportation, utilities, and hazardous and toxic substances. Mitigation measures identified during the Section 106 consultation process are defined in a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the Army and the State Historic Preservation Office and incorporated into the EA. The Army will implement the mitigation measures stipulated in the MOA prior to and following transfer of the Property out of federal ownership, as required. As such, no significant impacts to historic properties or any other resources analyzed in the EA will result from implementation of the proposed disposal and reuse action.

Conclusion. Based on the environmental impact analyses described in the EA, which is hereby incorporated into this FNSI, none of the alternatives for the Proposed Action would have a significant impact on the quality of the natural or human environment. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement is not required and will not be prepared.

Public Comment. The Army began a 30-day public review period by placing a Notice of Availability of the final EA and draft FNSI in the *Amarillo Globe News* and the *Dallas Morning News*. Interested parties were invited to review and comment on the EA and draft FNSI and were informed of their availability at the Amarillo Public Library, 413 East 4th Street, Amarillo, Texas 79101, and on the BRAC website. No public comments were received during the 30-day review. The Army received a letter dated May 12, 2014 from the Texas Historical Commission, stating that they had no comments. The Army also received a letter dated May 19, 2014 from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department stating their only comment was that the EA specified that they did not provide a response to a previously sent scoping letter; however, they provided a response in January 2012. Their response letters indicate that there are no threatened or endangered species within 1.5 miles of the USAR Center and that they anticipate no significant impacts to rare, threatened, or endangered species. Copies of the response letters have been inserted into Appendix D of the EA. No other agency responses were received.

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FOR THE COMMANDER

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